

# Young violinist discusses craft

interview by Mike Evans

Joshua Bell, the guest soloist with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra for their October 20 and 21 Master Series concerts, debuted at 14 under Riccardo Muti with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Since then he has compiled a formidable history, appearing with a number of the top orchestras around the world. Mr. Bell also has an exclusive contract with London Records and has recorded with the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields under Sir Neville Mariner, Vladimir Ashkenazy and the Montreal Symphony under Charles Dutoit.

**Gateway:** You achieved a considerable degree of success at a very young age. Did you have anything resembling a conventional education?

**Bell:** My parents always sent me to [regular] public school. Although I did start playing the violin at five and took to it early on, I did otherwise lead a pretty normal life. I consider myself lucky to live here, in Bloomington [Indiana] because the University of Indiana has a very famous music school and my violin teacher, Josef Gingold, who people come to from all over the world, just happened to be here.

**Gateway:** Did you ever do any post-secondary education?

**Bell:** Well, at twelve I entered the university as a special student and continued at the same time with high school. I graduated from high school at sixteen and entered the university, not quite full time, because I was already on the road a lot, and received an artist's diploma, which is a kind of graduate program. I never actually received a Bachelor's degree. Fortunately, a degree isn't that important in the music world. I would have liked to go to college though and maybe study something like physics.

**Gateway:** Do you ever feel that you missed out on anything?

**Bell:** A little bit. But it's so hard to say that because I'm so happy doing what I'm doing. I've gained so much from music that it would be ridiculous to say "Oh, I've missed this and that." And I've always done a lot of sports.

Indiana is, you know, very big on basketball.

**Gateway:** No kidding. Do you ever worry about jamming a finger?

**Bell:** I've jammed probably every finger at least once.

**Gateway:** Can you still play?

**Bell:** I've never had a serious injury. I've injured my ankles many times and I've had to play concerts on crutches.

**Gateway:** I'll bet your agent appreciates that.

**Bell:** Yeah, they're a little wary but they're pretty good. My parents have also been a great help.

**Gateway:** In contrast to popular music, rock or jazz, where an artist may substantially change an arrangement to give a piece of music his distinctive mark, your role as a

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classical musician is to remain faithful to the score. How do you interpret music to be an individual expression of your artistic sensibility?

**Bell:** If you take a Beethoven sonata there are an infinite number of ways to look at the music. It's not like there is one way we all strive to play. It's not like golf where you know exactly where to hit the ball every time you go out. The role of the performer is to find the way that piece inspires him or her — and to remain true to the composer. It's not like jazz which is almost entirely improvisation. But classical music, I think, should also be improvised in a certain way; the notes are there, but there should always be an improv-

Bell — p 12

# Citadel works miracles

**Miracle Worker**  
Citadel Maclab Theatre  
through December 3

by Dragos Ruiu

*The Miracle Worker*, which just opened at the Citadel's Maclab Theatre Youth and Family series, is a moving and entertaining retelling of the story of deaf-blind Helen Keller and the teacher who managed to get through to her, Annie Sullivan. It centers around the arrival of the northern tutor to the Keller homestead in good-ole southern Tuscumbia, Alabama — and the furor that ensues.

It is one of three plays being put on "in rep" by a troupe of actors the Citadel has assembled for the Youth and Family productions.

"In Rep," which is short for in repertory, means that the same actors are putting on several plays in the same span of time. The productions are overlapping, and the actors have the chance to play different roles simultaneously. If *The Miracle Worker* is any indication of the quality of performance of this 15-man troupe, the other two plays will be very good indeed.

This play is about Annie Sullivan, the headstrong and courageous teacher who managed to break through the barriers of deafness and blindness and communicate with Helen Keller, while at the same time battling her own blindness. Shannon Lawson, who plays Annie, admirably conveys the hardship that Helen Keller's teacher endured while putting up with the the young, precocious, and spoiled handicapped child.

The conflict and the relationship between these two is captivating — humorous on a physical comedy level, with some brilliantly funny moments like Miss Sullivan trying to teach a child used to eating with her hands the concept of a spoon — at the same time moving in an emotional sense, overwhelming the audience with empathy as the characters try to reach Helen. The play manages to keep the attention span of viewers of all ages; it has enough subtlety and drama to inspire the adults while having enough action and comedy to enthrall young children.

Ann Bagglely, who plays Helen, slowly steals the entire show without saying a single word. She manages to flesh out a character that has no lines, and has to stumble around

on stage. She does a very good job of playing the difficult role of an impaired person.

Also worth noting is the interesting interplay between Helen's brother James Keller and her father Captain Keller. Michael Mahonen is an excellent brash youth, growing up rapidly and chafing against the bridle of his father's stodgy, conservative southern views. He delivers some of the most delightfully comic lines of the entire show with well-timed irony and sarcasm.


Captain Keller, as portrayed by Donald Adams, also had a few gems of humor. It was great to watch him squirm and shuffle, as he was confronted by the headstrong northern tutor he hired to help his daughter, who was obviously just as stubborn as he was. He is unused to non-docile women-folk, and has to make "allowances."

The only flaws in the show were the overdone and surrealistic flashback sequences intended to convey the internal battle Annie Sullivan is waging trying to overcome her past — her growing up in a sanatorium, the death of her brother from TB, her battle with poverty and blindness. They did not integrate well with the rest of the breezy, realistic show. If anything they seemed a bit pretentious and stuck out like a sore thumb. But they were short-lived and can be dismissed.

This flaw aside, the play is an enjoyable way to spend the evening. It is a first rate production, with good casting, acting, sets, and scripting. It is a marvelously funny and intense drama that will appeal to adults and children alike.



F.A. Ellic



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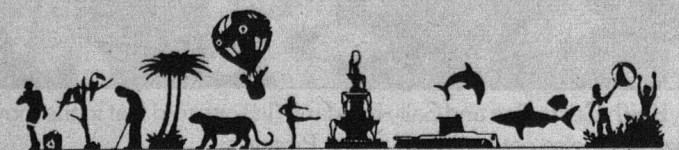
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# Newman's Own *Fatman* recipe

**Fat Man and Little Boy**  
Famous Players Theaters

review by Arthur Kingston

*Fat Man and Little Boy* is a historical drama dealing with the creation of the atomic bomb, the Manhattan Project. Paul Newman portrays Major General Leslie Groves, overseeing the project from inception to completion. Dwight Schultz stars as the renowned physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer, a brilliant man hand-picked to spearhead the development of the atomic bomb. John Cusack plays the youthful, naive physicist Michael Merriman, part of the elite core of scientists chosen to work on the project.

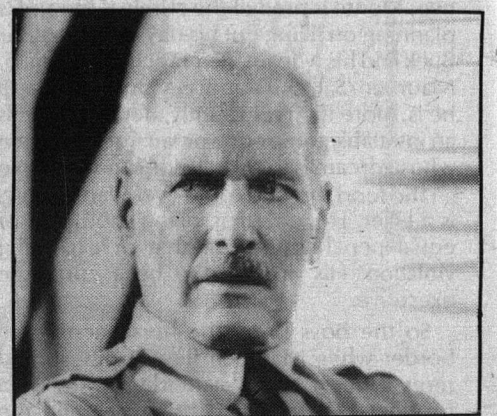
General Groves does not initially wish to be part of the project, but rather be fighting the war in Europe. However, with his arrival at Los Alamos, he quickly establishes the chain of command and the project's priorities in the cliched military fashion. He does not let obstacles prevent him from doing his appointed duty, showing himself to be a driven and determined man, unstoppable by any force on heaven or earth.

Robert Oppenheimer is far from a stereotypical quiet, bespectacled scientist, but moody and arrogant, commanding the respect of those around him. Nevertheless, Oppenheimer is not without flaws, as shown by his affair with a known communist. Oppenheimer's adulterous behavior gives rise to friction between him and the military, as they feel that they have a potential security risk on their hands, while he feels that his private life is his own concern. Inevitably it comes down to Groves reading Oppenheimer the riot act, bluntly reminding him of his duty and responsibilities to straighten him out.

Michael Merriman is young and innocent,

naive to his surroundings, and accordingly is chosen by the fates to be the sacrificial lamb. His assignment to a highly dangerous research project, cynically known as "tickling the tail of the dragon," is his undoing.

*Fat Man and Little Boy* is a gripping tale, examined from the perspective of the scientists and concerning itself with how their work would change the world as we know it. We observe the scientists develop over time from the initial lack of understanding the true nature of the weapon which they are creating, to eventual full-blown cognizance of the elemental horror which they have spawned. Thankfully, the movie does not concentrate on the technical workings of the atomic bomb, making an assumption that the audience possesses at least a rudimentary grasp of nuclear physics and mechanics of atomic weaponry. The acting is first rate, with the possible exception of Dwight Schultz not being one-hundred-percent believable as Robert Oppenheimer, making a fascinating and interesting movie to watch. Not to be missed at any cost.



Nuclear Newman